Chinese Stenography
or
Chinese Shorthand

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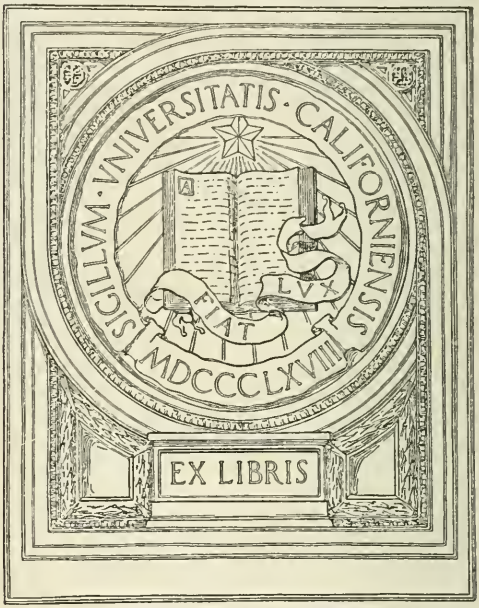

ROBERT ERNEST COWAN

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PUBLISHER'S PREFACE.

For thousands of years China's vast population has worshiped its ancestors and clung to their customs. To forsake the ways of the fathers has been considered by them an act of disrespect and disloyalty to their parents, an act in which a Chinaman can not indulge without losing the respect of all his former associates and his relatives.

This has held the whole Chinese nation to the difficult method of writing invented thousands of years ago and faithfully followed by each successive generation through the long years that have intervened between that uncharted past and the present time.

That method of writing, so difficult in itself, has required so many years of the closest application for its mastery by even the brightest minds, that the great majority of Chinese parents did not consider it worth their while to have it taught to their daughters; and very many indeed have not been able to keep their boys in school until they had mastered it. Thus there exists to-day in China a great multitude who can not read their own language.

COWAN LIBRARY, 1936

This has been one of the great obstacles which missionaries in China have encountered in their work. They have gone there with the Bible translated into the Chinese language, only to find a vast concourse of people who could not read it. This condition was almost universal so far as the women were concerned. So, although the missionaries had overcome the obstacle of translating the Bible into the languages of the nation, they had not overcome the obstacle of a great multitude's inability to read it after its translation into the very language they spoke.

But God, in His opening providence, has now opened a way whereby this obstacle also can be and will be overcome. He has given to a faithful handmaid of His the system of universal sound-writing outlined in these pages—a system which can be used in writing any language, but which will

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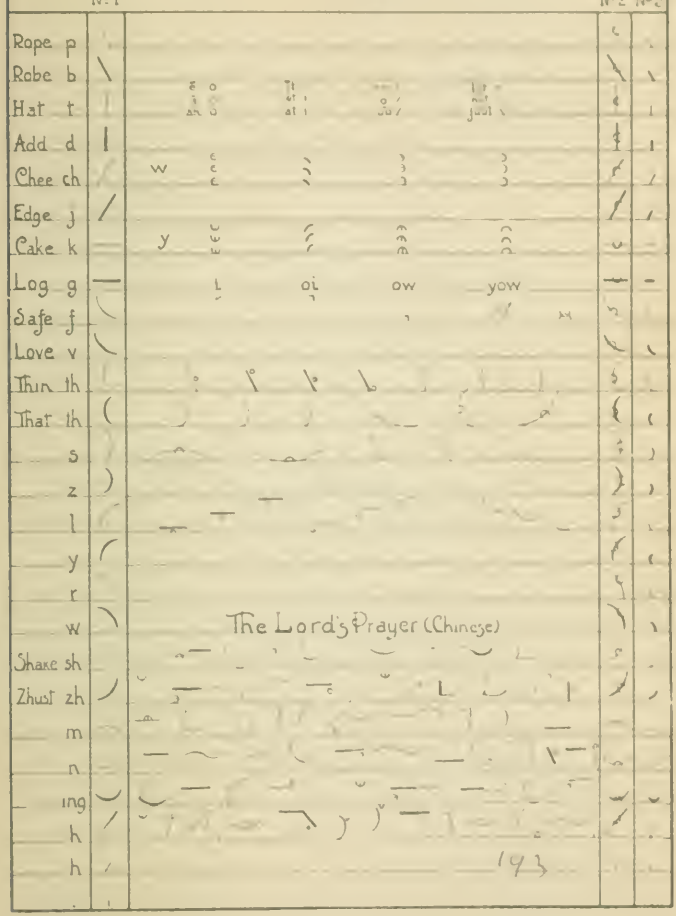
find its greatest field in China; and He is also breaking down much of the prejudice which formerly would have barred out even such a simple method of writing as this. Thus many Chinese have now taken up this system of writing so unlike the system which their fathers used through the generations of the past.

The amount of time necessary to learn to read all the dialects of China has by this system been reduced from many years to a few hours. Chinese men and women who have been unable to read the Word of God in their own language will now have it presented to them in such simple and easily-learned characters that any who will may learn, in a few hours' study, to read its blessed promises, warnings, and instructions.

Doubtless this system will soon be used in other kinds of literature, in commerce, and in common correspondence; but the burden of the one who has given it to the world and nurtured it through years of opposition is that the people of China may have the Word of God in a system of writing which they all can learn, women as well as men, the poor as well as the rich. Therefore, it is the design that the book which shall follow this shall consist of portions of the Bible transliterated into Chinese shorthand. With this done, and a corps of willing missionary teachers to give the little instruction necessary, a great advance will have been made in preparing the way for the evangelization of China. And for this blessed consummation the publishers of this little work shall continue to pray. THE PUBLISHERS.

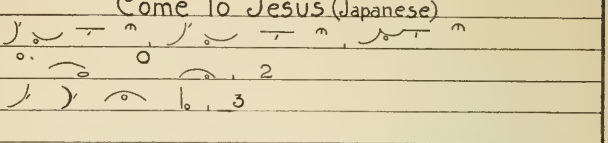
Universal Stenography, or Chinese Shorthand
Table of Phonetic Characters

The sound of the phonetic character is found in the words written in the left-hand margin

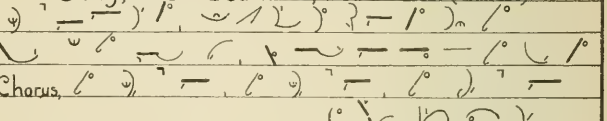


See page 7 for a more detailed exposition of these phonetic characters.

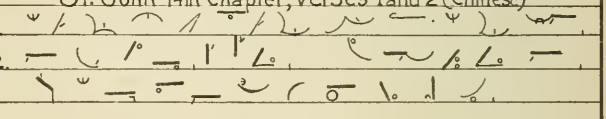
Come To Jesus (Japanese)



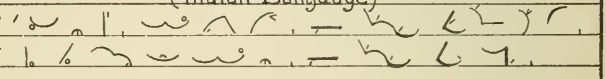
Song, Jesus Loves Me, This I Know (Chinese)



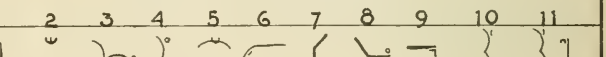
St. John 14th Chapter, Verses 1 and 2 (Chinese)



Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep
(Indian Language)



Chinese Numerals



Alphabet No 1. is to be used the same as Pitman's. No. 2 is a reserve force upon which to draw. When No 1. fails to give a new sound, then take the character giving the sound nearest to that sound, and place a small half circle, ⊂ ⌒ through it, thus: n ◡ ◡. The latter is a nasal groaning sound very different from the former.

⊸ is a guttural sound, and the nearest sound to it is represented by g—. By placing the half circle through—, we have ⊸, which represents the sound. The sound is a guttural sound. It is made by placing the end of the tongue in the roof of the mouth and attempting to pronounce the—.

The vowel sounds are the same, e, a, ah but made in a circle shape ⁰⁰. In order to emphasize them, which is so very necessary in the Chinese language, make ∘ larger O. To prolong the sound, make it oval ⊙.

To emphasize the double vowels pass the center stroke through them. Thus ⌒ becomes ⌒ and ∋ becomes ∋ To prolong the sound make the center stroke heavy. Thus ∋ becomes ∋ To emphasize the dipthongs oi ˥ and ow ˥, double the size, thus ˥ ˥

Write the word in one of three positions to indicate a low tone, a higher tone, or a very high tone. Examples: ⊸ ⊸ ⊸ ⌒ ⌒ ⌒ ◡ ◡ ◡

Many of their words are apparently the same, but mean differently according to intonation; but as the words have their names according to

their positions, this rule of the consonant could not apply to the vowels; therefore, in order to raise the sound of the vowels, place them in their natural positions, the little tick before them.

And to lower them, the little

For prolonging the sounds double the length of the strokes

To comprehend the English at the same time, while reading the Chinese, place the vowels that give the English in the center or at either end of the word....

Another way of understanding it is to write the Chinese words with black ink; then hand it to your Chinese pupil to write through the same, or above, but with red ink. Thus with any system of shorthand (Our Father in Heaven). Now, with red ink write through those characters the words for which they stand in English, as follows:

The foregoing is all that is necessary to write any dialect in the Chinese language, but as Japanese has longer syllables and longer words, Alphabet No. 3 is sometimes convenient. Its characters are the same as No. 1, but smaller etc.

The Japanese, like the English needs no intonation.

A small circle commencing or in the middle of a word gives con or com

The circle at the end of the word gives tion Make the circle larger for plurals

A dot at the end of a word adds t or d fade.

Universal Stenography, or Chinese Shorthand
Table of Phonetic Characters

The sound of the phonetic character is found in the words written in the left-hand margin

	№1						№2	№3
Rope p		ē o	ĭ ı	aw ʼ	ŏ ˋ	ī ˊ oi ˥		
Robe b		ā o	ĕ ı	ō ʼ	ŭ ˋ	ow ˥		
		äh o	ă ı	ōō ʼ	ŏŏ ˋ			
Hat t		Examples: pea, pay, bah, ape, tea						
Add d		it, Ed, add, Jo, too						
Each ch		wē ɛ	wĭ ˋ	wâw ɜ	wŏ ɔ	yow		
Edge j		wāy ɛ	wĕ ˋ	wō ɜ	wŭ ɔ			
		wäh ɛ	wăḱ ˋ	wōō ɜ	wŏŏ ɔ			
Kay k		yē ɯ	yĭ ʼ	yâw ʍ	yŏ ʌ			
Log g		yā ɯ	yĕ ʼ	yō ʍ	yŭ ʌ			
		yäh ɯ	yă ʼ	yōō ʍ	yŏŏ ʌ	⋈		
If f		Examples: weed, wade, wit, wet						
Love v		watt, wood, yield, Yale, yacht						
Thin th								
Then th		Make any consonant double length to prolong						
See s		its sound. Examples						
Haze z								
Lay l		Write the word in one of three positions						
You y		to indicate a low tone, a higher tone, or a						
Are r		very high tone.						
Way w		Examples:						
Shake sh								
Zhust zh		The mark ⋈ may be used to represent						
Aim m		double vowel sounds not provided for in any						
In n		of the double vowel characters in the						
Wing ng		above table.						
Hay h								
h								

OUR LORD'S PRAYER

祈禱文

我父在天願爾名聖
爾国臨格爾旨得成
在地若天 所需之糧
今日賜我 我免人負
求免我負 勿彼我試
拯我出恶 爾国權能
皆爾所有 發及世世
我所愿也 亜孟

UNIVERSAL STENOGRAPHY, OR CHINESE SHORTHAND

The Story of Its Conception and the Struggles through Which It Has Been Compelled to Pass in the Uphill Fight for Success

I have often been asked how I came to invent a method of writing a language which I had never learned and can not hope to learn. In this letter to the Woman's Christian Temperance Union I will tell you.

After the death of my husband, twenty-three years ago, I felt I must have something to take my mind from my trouble, and at the same time be a possible source of income to me, so that, should I lose my property, I could earn my living. I decided upon the study of stenography. Having learned the old system of Isaac Pitman in my youthful days, I procured all the new and improved works of Ben. Pitman, Marsh, and Graham. Fortunately I had two neighbors whose sons had made a specialty of stenography, and from these I received many good ideas that have been of assistance to me in this work.

It has always been thought a thing impossible to construct a Chinese alphabet, and, although I have found that it is possible and that the alphabet is easily mastered, yet this work, like all other good discoveries, has had to stand its share of persecution for years.

In the year 1883 circumstances so shaped themselves that I found myself teaching stenography to a bright class of public-school teachers in Sacramento, California, and while repeating the vowel sounds, as one has to so constantly in teaching stenography, I became interested in noting the possibilities lying in these many phonetic characters. As I was writing the word "China," it dawned upon me that I could write any word in any language by the aid of these various characters representing sounds. To do this, I must confine myself to the corresponding style, eliminating all the logograms, word signs, and abbreviations. The thought was with me night and day, until one day I was appointed by the W. C. T. U. to call upon the Rev. A. J. Becker to deliver an address on Temperance. Knowing him to be a master of many languages, I told him I had made a discovery which would be of great benefit to foreign missionaries. He was willing to learn from a woman, and so at his request I explained to him the principles of the system. He requested that I take him as a pupil, and to this, of course, I gladly consented. After one week's study of the Pitman system of stenography, he announced his belief in the feasibility of my work, and requested that I write what he said while talking in some foreign language. He began dictating to me a letter in a foreign language to his wife, speaking slowly, while I wrote very carefully, placing every vowel and double vowel in its proper place, but using at that time no other characters than those found in Pitman's system.

When I had read to Mr. Becker what I had written, he said, "Do you know you are reading that with the perfect accent of a German scholar?" Not understanding that language, I, too, was astonished at my discovery, for at that time I had never heard of stenography being applied to any language except the English.

When Mr. Becker arrived in the East he wrote me several letters saying that he had brought the matter before a number of learned men, linguists, reporters, and others; that at first they had doubted the possibility of it, but finally grasped the idea, and expressed astonishment that a woman away out in Sacramento, California, had been the first to think of combining these signs for any language.

When I began to experiment with it on the Chinese language, with its sounds so different from any that I had ever learned, I soon found I needed another alphabet of both vowels and consonants. How to obtain this without taxing the memory too much was at first a puzzle to me. But after praying over the matter, it came to me to use what might be termed a trade-mark, and place it upon the Pitman vowels and consonant signs, giving these characters a different appearance, and leaving them without name or sound, but as a reserve force from which to draw. These I would christen with the new sound uttered by the Chinese reading to me.

The next question was, What should be the shape of this trade-mark? So one night I dreamed that I saw a large half moon across my room filled with

vowels and diphthongs in a leaning position, thus, 1. The next day I heard a Chinaman say, "yow," and I immediately christened this character "yow." That is the only word-sign used that is not spelled out phonetically. The half moon I took for my trade-mark. It could be placed upon double-length characters to represent a prolonged sound.

I now felt that I was prepared to write any word that a Chinaman could speak; but a more important lesson came to me later on, for this matter was revealed to me little by little, as I felt the need, like the falling of the manna for the children of Israel.

I experimented with it on my Swedish neighbor from time to time, but did little with it on the Chinese for several years. I believe the Lord permitted it to lie dormant during this time because I was not fully consecrated to Him. I could not then have stood the discouragements which were to come in connection with this work. Seven years after I first thought of the possibility of these many phonetic characters, I did, at a camp-meeting at Beulah Park, make that surrender to the Lord which brought to me the victory. All alone in my tent the surrender was made and the experience came as quickly as conversion ever came. The next day I accosted a Chinaman who passed my tent, and told him what the Lord had given me for his people. I there gave him a lesson in Chinese shorthand, and at once got such a love for the work and such a high esteem for the Chinese race as I had never had before. I felt also a great desire to teach

the missionaries who should go to China, because of the great saving in time which it would mean to them in laboring among the Chinese, many of whom are not able to read the Bible even in their own language.

The experiences which I met with in trying to get Chinese to read to me so that I might write their words were varied, and, on the whole, not very encouraging. I went into one Chinese store and asked them to talk to me in their language that I might write it down. I asked how they said, "In God I trust." That and many other sentences they gave me. I put this writing away, did not look at it for a week, to see if I could read it after the sounds had gone from my mind. I found that I could do so, and, going to a Chinese clerk, asked him to listen to me read. He pronounced the reading very good and asked where I had learned it. That was my first encouragement.

I went to the Methodist Chinese Mission on Third Street and engaged Fon Con, the Chinese preacher in charge, to read to me three times a week. After having written several pages, he told me that some of my words were very good, but that others were not so good. Hoping for help in this difficulty, I requested him to ask his superintendent when he came up again to come to see me. In the meantime I was led to read in one of our prayer-meetings what I had written, and Sister Carley exclaimed, "That is of God." She insisted that I had a duty to perform in this direction from which I must not

shrink, although she knew how I did shrink from publicity. She soon wrote to our superintendent, Dr. F., of San Francisco, fully believing that he would be able to help me and open the way for me to teach the system in the mission schools. In his reply Dr. F. declared the idea absurd and impossible. This unexpected blow did not discourage me in the least, for I knew that, being of God, it must be persecuted, perhaps even by those who ought to have encouraged it.

Not long after hearing from Brother F. through his letter to Sister Carley, he called on me by my invitation. I attempted to lay the plan before him, when he remarked: "Now, sister, I do not wish to discourage you in any work that you are undertaking for the Lord, but I am sure you are undertaking a great impossibility. Don't you know that no one has ever done that or ever can?" "No, sir," I replied, "I do not know that what has never been done can not be done in this day and age, especially when faith, study, and works are put together." I told him that I was not doing this for any selfish interest or for money, but for the millions of souls back of it; that it meant a Bible for the missionaries which the heathen could read, the ignorant as well as the learned, the women as well as the men.

Brother F. then went on to tell me of the difficulties of the language; for instance, the use of the same word in a low or high tone to express different things. I had never thought over that. Probably it was such words that Fon Con had said were not

very good. I then asked that he should read to me from his Chinese Bible or speak a few sentences to me, but he excused himself and bade me good-by. It seemed as if a wet blanket had been thrown over my zeal, but I prayed to the Lord that He would give me one more lesson. It came to me as if it had been written on the walls of my room. Why not use the principles of music? The musician raises and lowers his voice. Take three imaginary lines and write the words in three different positions for the three different intonations.

I was overjoyed, and could hardly wait till morning to go down to our M. E. Mission to see Fon Con and have him read to me, and to explain to him that I knew now what words were not good. But through Fon Con's conversation with Mr. F., knowing that Mr. F. was an American and a great missionary, he had accepted Mr. F.'s ideas, taking them for law and gospel. So he said: "If you want to learn China talk, do alle same as Mr. F.; go to China, get a teacher all day. You velly smart learn in five years, then by and by you read little in our Bible."

But God never designed that His work should travel at a snail's pace, while man's work travels with the speed of electricity. However, I could not induce Fon Con or any of the others in that school to give me further help in this work. Through the influence of Brother F. also I was prevented from teaching in the evening Chinese Sunday-school. I was completely ignored Sunday after Sunday, al-

though in attendance and prepared to teach, until I saw that I was but wasting my time there. Some asked me how I could bear such repeated insults. I replied that it was not I, but the work which the Lord had called me to do, and they would have to reckon with Him concerning the way they treated that.

I then presented the matter to the Baptist Mission. Fortunately, the Chinese minister and superintendent were willing to examine the system, saw the feasibility of it, and gave me welcome to their hall every Saturday evening to teach it, and advised that I invite the other denominations in to take part. Brother F. permitted me to give a public invitation to the members of the M. E. Mission school, but I received no additions to my class from that source. To Brother Sam, of the Presbyterian Church, I gave two lessons, and he turned to Brother Chow Len and said, "If Mr. F. had taken this one lesson, he never would have talked to the Chinamen as he did." Chow Len said, "Now let us read in nothing but the Cantonese dialect, and have it written down in that, and this will bring about a universal dialect; for when I learn a little more about the Chinese stenography, I intend to publish it to the world, that my people may have the benefit of it." But, to my disappointment, he started for China the next week.

Brother Sam was too busy to continue his lessons, but requested that I teach his wife. I did so, and she learned it in a few weeks; but she was too busy to teach it to others. Most of my class, being work-

ing boys, went into the country to pick fruit, leaving me again without practise or pupil.

Knowing that the system applied to every language, I taught it to a Scotchman, who was going to Africa as an evangelist. He, too, tried to get Chinamen to read to him, but they were too busy, or would have nothing to do with any one who said "shorthand" to them. Even the women and children had been influenced against it. I went to San Francisco, but found that even here the influence of Mr. F. had been at work, and none of the four missions would give me a hearing before their Chinese pupils. I received permission to teach in the Chinese Salvation Army quarters during the afternoon and one evening each week. Here a *Call* reporter interviewed me, and published much of the plain, truthful letter which I am writing to my friends. He asked what I called the system. I told him Mrs. Ferguson had christened it Pentecostal Stenography, as every one hears in his own tongue. He said he should call it a human phonograph, as by this system one would be able to reproduce every sound heard. Then the *Chronicle* reporter called and said that they wanted the story for their New York paper; but as it turned out, the *Call* had already telegraphed the matter to its New York paper.

I was cordially received by the Episcopal clergyman, Mr. Emery, who introduced me to one of their missionaries on her way to Japan. I taught her, to her great satisfaction.

I next presented the system to Mrs. Carrie Judd-Montgomery, at Beulah Park. She very soon grasped the details of it, and said to me that when her brother was dying he declared that God would raise up some one who would get up a system of stenography that would write the Chinese language, "and you tell me," said she, "that it was about that time that it was presented to you." She urged me to go on with it and to teach it to her adopted daughter, who was engaged in Salvation Army work in San Francisco. I was kindly received there by Ensign Jackson and others. She said she knew this was of the Lord, and suggested that we have a season of prayer over the matter. We did so, and her earnest prayers have followed me like angels' wings.

Soon after this, while at the Beulah camp-meeting, I prayed to the Lord for another lesson, and the lesson came. It was in reference to raising and lowering the tones and intonations of the single and double vowels. Being stationary, and taking their names from their positions, they could not be raised and lowered on imaginary lines like the consonants. The lesson made it so very plain that it is no wonder the wise men of the East asked the Rev. Mr. Becker fifteen years ago, "How is it that a woman away out in California should have thought of this and we never did?"

I will now relate an incident to show the necessity of a simpler system of writing than that which the Chinese now have. A Chinese Salvation Army

meeting was being held in Sacramento, and one of the workers requested me to speak to the Chinese. I felt that I could not do it, and declined. She then asked me to read something to them. Something seemed to say to me, "If you are too proud to speak to these Chinamen when you have the opportunity, you may never have another." I then went right out into the ring. I always carry a Bible with me with the English on the one side and the difficult Chinese writing on the other. I opened this Bible at St. John 3:16, and told the assembled Chinese that I held a book in my hand one side of which was English and the other Chinese, and that I would read the English if they would read the Chinese. I passed the book all around, but not one of them could read their own language in this hard writing. A Chinese physician, who came along then, politely offered to read it for me. This was encouraging both to me and the Chinese.

This educated Chinaman was Dr. Hing. I went to his office and he read to me and I wrote the fourteenth chapter of John, and then began the first chapter. He became so interested after a few lessons that he understood it all. Dr. Hing had a large practise, and many times would be called away at the time when I expected to meet him; but after several months I succeeded in getting part of the book of John written. But this was too slow work. On the kind invitation of my friend, Mrs. K., I went to San Francisco again, this time to visit with her a certain very influential minister and superin-

tendent of a certain church. He was delighted to meet again the wife of his old friend and college mate. She requested him to listen to my work. I gave him my letter of recommendation, written by Dr. Hing, of Sacramento. It being in Chinese, he called a Chinaman to read it to him. He looked at me as if he had caught a thief, and said: "Ah, but you can't do it! Dr. F. told me you could not do it."

"Pardon me, sir," said I, "but Dr. F. never saw a single word I ever wrote, nor would he listen to me about it for a single moment."

"But Dr. F. told me that he had a talk with you."

"Certainly, but he did all the talking, telling me how long he was in China before he could even order his cook to roast a chicken, and he had often thought that with his time and talents he might have done better than to have gone among the Chinese."

"Well, well," he replied, "I have been to China myself and know it can't be done." I said, "But there is nothing impossible when faith and works are put together with study and a willing spirit."

"Oh, if you have had a revelation, I suppose you may do it!"

My friend interfered at this juncture, and said, "Doctor, I beg of you to take your Chinese Bible and read a verse or two for Mrs. Barrett, and see for yourself."

"Oh," said he, "if there has been a miracle performed, I suppose you can do it!" By this time the

old gentleman was so nervous that he trembled like a leaf. He got his glasses half way up to his eyes, and his Bible opened, when suddenly he threw it upon the table, turned and walked out of the room, saying, "Dr. F. says you can't do it, and I know it can't be done."

The door closed. My friend was amazed. She thought surely he would return and apologize, but he did not. She then turned to the Chinaman and said, "You open the Bible and read us a verse, and see how quickly it is written in shorthand."

He did so, and I wrote and then read to him. He said, "That is just what I said, only you pronounced one word a little different, but all very good."

I then decided to visit the Chinese vice-consuls. When I had explained the work to Mr. Moore, the vice-consul, he became very much interested in it, asking me to go over it again, which I did most gladly, he writing it down as I explained it. Within half an hour he had grasped the whole idea. He said, "This is a much easier way and a quicker way than we have, and it ought to be taught in our public schools." I thanked him for his kind attention, and went away rejoicing that I had found such a perfect gentleman, one who was willing to investigate before passing judgment. At the next meeting with Mr. Moore he gave me the following recommendation:—

"I have examined Mrs. Barrett's Chinese shorthand sys-

tem, and have the same opinion as Dr. Hing, and I think it ought to be taught in our public schools.

"C. F. MOORE,

"*Attache Chinese Legation, Washington, D. C.*"

The following is Dr. Hing's letter:—

"SACRAMENTO, Cal., April, 1898.

"Mrs. Barrett, residing at Sacramento, Cal., has invented a method of Chinese shorthand, which I have studied with her, and Mrs. B. is anxious to teach it to our Chinese, without receiving any pay whatever. It takes only a few days to accomplish the work. I am glad to indorse it and recommend it. DR. T. W. HING.

"*707 J Street, Sacramento.*"

On the departure of my daughter for Europe I was left free to give more of my time and attention to the work. At San Francisco I was kindly received also by the consul's interpreter, Mr. Nam, who introduced me to their Chinese school-teacher. I began teaching in his school at once, and succeeded in finding an interpreter who could print my lesson leaves. He printed one thousand on red paper, and these I gave to the pupils. Within six weeks the boys had a perfect understanding of Chinese shorthand. Mr. Nam indorsed the system, and said that the consul was very much pleased with it. One of the members of the Chinese legation asked if I would teach the system to their women. I told him I would be delighted to do so, and he at once introduced me to the family of San Jose Charley. The girls in this family learned very quickly, although they could not speak a word of

English. The landlord, who could speak English, also learned the system.

I found that traveling up and down the hills of Chinatown and up and down the flights of stairs, was too much for my strength; but I was willing to die in Chinatown rather than give up the work before I had succeeded in getting it into our missions among the Chinese girls. One Chinaman who had learned the system asked me why I did not teach it to the girls in the mission, and then take them to China to teach the women there. He knew that this system would overcome the difficulty which nearly all Chinamen experience in communicating with, or sending money to, their relatives in China. The women can not read, and the men have to trust to the honesty of those by whom they send the money. So Mr. Lee said to me: "Now I am going back to China to teach my wife this easy way to write the only language she knows or ever will know. English longhand too hard for them to learn, but this Chinese shorthand learn at home in two months, and then can write and read very well for writing letters. Then when I come back I can write to my wife, she can read it, and get all the money I send her. No more Chinaman read my wife's letters. All very happy now."

In a school on Dupont Street I learned a lesson which has been of value to me. I was teaching three boys, two of whom learned the system very readily, but the third seemed to be an exception. I feared that he never would learn it, but I found

that he was an apt scholar in the Chinese way of writing. One day while teaching him, I noticed him watching me very closely, and I concluded he could learn by observation. I had him read short words from his second reader. He copied them, and thus soon learned to write in the Chinese shorthand and also in the English. So I found that some of the Chinese learn by imitation better than in any other way. The mother of the boy was so pleased that she sent me $2.50, and this, with 75 cents which I received from San Jose Charley's landlord, I felt well repaid me for my experience in Chinatown during those fifteen months.

One gentleman who learned this system went to San Francisco, intending to introduce it, but received no encouragement, not even a hearing from those who should have given it hearty support. He went to China, hoping to obtain a hearing from broader-minded men, but met with the same experiences and opposition that worked against me in San Francisco. The enemy had gone ahead and deceived the very elect. He then started a little mission of his own.

I had a great burden to teach the system to the Chinese girls in the missions, knowing the great advantage which this would be, as they would be able to teach it to their countrywomen. So great was my anxiety over the matter that it troubled me in my dreams. In one of my dreams it seemed that I was caring for some children whom I could not see, as they were down in a pit which was deep and

dark. I called for some one to come and help me. At last one or two women, seeing my distress, spoke slowly, in a low tone of voice, saying, "Yes, there are children down there in the dark." I urged them to call louder, to cry out for help. Just then a tall negro came rushing towards me, reached down into the pit, and brought up a large garden pot full of fresh earth with seeds in it that had just begun to sprout. Sister Carley interpreted the dream to mean that the Africans would be the first to help in this work. She said, "You are now sowing seed which will grow, and the harvest will be great." At Beulah camp-meeting five years ago I met a tall African and his wife who were collecting means to return to their mission in Africa. I had the happy satisfaction of teaching them, and while they spoke in the African language I wrote it down. So the seed is sown thick for a great harvest for future generations to reap.

I had the satisfaction of teaching the system to some gentlemen from Australia who were in San Francisco for the purpose of purchasing a Chinese printing-press, and I have no doubt now that hundreds of these lesson leaves have been reproduced in Australia. Thus the seeds are being sown in all lands.

I was advised by some of my friends to visit Prof. John Fryer, who had spent many years in China, and is an accomplished linguist. I attended one of his lectures, and, upon being introduced to him, received a very kind invitation to visit his home, in

Oakland. I did so, and he and his wife investigated the merits of the system of Chinese shorthand. Mrs. Fryer read to me from her Chinese Bible, and Professor Fryer inspected my lesson leaves and listened to my reading of what his charming wife had read to me. Professor Fryer informed me that some ten years ago he knew of a man in China who was teaching some such system of writing, but it was not generally accepted because the missions would not receive it. I told him I would like to shake hands with that man, for I had had just such an experience in San Francisco. I asked how the Chinese received it. Professor Fryer stated that some of them received it gladly, and those who received it learned it quickly. His wife also corroborated this statement, and stated that in a short time they could correspond with other girls who had gone home from that mission. Now either the Lord presented this thought to several at the same time, or else this gentleman in China learned it from one of my earliest pupils.

Professor Fryer stated that he did not know whether the system would be of benefit commercially or not, but declared that if they had Bibles printed in this system, it would be of great benefit. I exclaimed, "Bless God, that is all I ever hoped for." But the Chinese consul had declared that they must have it taught in their public schools. And now that we are to have a Bible printed in Chinese shorthand, let it be known that all credit is due to the Chinese; for had I received no more encourage-

ment from them than I did from our own people, I would have given up in despair long ago.

One Chinaman remarked to me that "China would always be a heathen country until we have our women educated." So he asked me to come and teach this to his daughter after school hours. I did so, and in less than two months this little girl only twelve years of age had such a perfect understanding of the entire system that she could write anything she wanted to. She would listen to her father reading from his Chinese Bible and take it down in Chinese shorthand. So proficient did she become in this art that I asked her to write something from the Bible and let me see if she could read it backwards, commencing at the last end of the last line. She did it rapidly and without difficulty. I then had her read before a large missionary meeting at the residence of the Rev. Mr. Lock. She chose the Sermon on the Mount, which she read with great self-possession. After reading several verses she said, "Now I will read it backwards." Needless to say, she covered herself with honors, just as scores of other Chinese girls could have done if the mission doors had not been closed against the work—all through the influence of one man, who had condemned it without a hearing.

I must pass over many of the varied and sometimes disappointing experiences which fell to my lot in my teaching work in San Francisco, where the misguided influence of a few had erected such a strong barrier to this work given me by the Lord to

do. After some particularly discouraging experiences, I contracted *la grippe*, which incapacitated me for active work for several days. While thus afflicted I determined to place my work before Mr. Pitman, and the Phonographic Institute. They heartily indorsed my work, saying that they would be pleased to recommend it in their next monthly magazine, and advised me to bring it before the missionary society of New York, which I did.

In the *Phonographic Magazine* of the following month, February, 1899, we find the following note:—

"Mrs. Julia A. Barrett, of San Francisco, Cal., who was for many years a zealous teacher of Ben. Pitman's Phonography, has invented a system of Chinese shorthand, based on the Pitman alphabet. The work is designed principally to aid in the spreading of the gospel in China, by enabling the missionaries to readily read the Scripture in any dialect. We wish Mrs. Barrett the success which her good work so richly deserves."

The letters from Mr. Pitman I read to Mr. Urmy, who was a great advocate of my work. He suggested that I send them to Dr. Baldwin, of our missionary society in New York. I replied that it seemed to me I had carried the work alone about long enough, and that some one ought to take hold and help. He said, "Give me those letters, and I will send them to Dr. Baldwin myself, as I am well acquainted with him." He sent them off, and in a few weeks came and read to me the following letter:—

"MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF THE M. E. CHURCH,
150 Fifth Avenue, New York,
Jan. 24, 1899.

"REV. W. S. URMY, D. D., 1110 Clay St., San Francisco, Cal.—*My Dear Brother:* I have your letter concerning the lady who has adapted the shorthand system to the writing of the Chinese language, and have referred the matter to Dr. Baldwin, as he is much more expert than I, you may imagine, in the mystery of Chinese hieroglyphics and sounds. He thinks it entirely practicable, and advises that Dr. F. be consulted concerning its introduction into the Chinese school in San Francisco. He has entire authority in such matters.

'Give my compliments to Mrs. Barrett and congratulate her on an invention that may be greatly useful in the furtherance of the good work. I return the letter which you enclosed to me, as you requested. Fraternally yours,

"A. J. PALMER,
"*Corresponding Secretary.*"

I told Dr. Urmy that I took him and Dr. Lock to witness that I stood ready and was anxious to go into our mission at any time, to teach, free of charge, any day or any part of the day or evening, but I did not believe that the Lord called upon me any longer to plead with any mortal man to give me a hearing. After this I taught for a while in the jail to some who were criminals and to those who were simply waiting for their papers to entitle them to land. Some of the officers saw the feasibility of the system and joined my class, so that they could read their orders to the Chinese in their own language. This was a very interesting class.

After this I attended the camp-meeting at Beulah, and at one meeting it was required of every one to

sing a verse or read one. As I am not much of a singer, I said I would read in the Chinese language. When I had finished reading the Lord's prayer, I said, "If there is a Chinese brother in the house, he will please rise and tell you what I have read." A Chinese rose up and said that it was the Lord's prayer, and that it was not only read well but that every word was pronounced perfectly. He said: "I think it is something wonderful that this lady writes our language with the same kind of characters that she uses to write the English. It is wonderful indeed." This Chinaman came to my class there, and, while he would read from his Chinese Bible, I would write down upon the blackboard. One of the ministers present became much interested in my work, and declared, "I prophesy that this will go all over China."

I had thought that I would not give my most severe persecutions, but I must here relate one as a warning to the young not to give up because of any insult from officials. I was appointed a delegate from Sacramento to attend the foreign mission convention at Oakland. I was received very kindly by a lady of the reception committee. I thought this would be a good opportunity to get some of the ladies who were before the public to introduce my work before the convention. I soon had the attention of many of them, among whom was the daughter of my presiding elder. She, having been a teacher of Pitman's stenography, comprehended it very quickly. She urged that it was my duty to present

the matter to the convention. I put it off until the afternoon of the last day. At that time the school-children were to speak and some papers were to be read. But by this time it had reached the ears of the committee that I intended speaking upon the subject of Chinese shorthand. I timidly approached one of the members of the committee and said: "The Lord has sent me down here to deliver a message. Can I have ten minutes to bring it before the convention?" She replied, "What is the nature of your message?" I answered that I had discovered a method of shorthand the alphabet of which fits the Chinese language as perfectly as the Roman alphabet does the English.

I felt the shrug of the shoulder as she said, "I do not see any sense in reading something when you do not understand what you are reading about." I said to her, "When I have the English Bible in one hand and am reading from the Chinese shorthand in the other, I know what I am reading about, and so also will the heathen before me, though he be too ignorant to read a Bible printed in the difficult Chinese characters." She stated that this was not the proper place for it. I asked where the proper place would be, to which she replied: "Well, well, I do not know, perhaps before a publishing board. There is no room for it here, anyway." I answered, "No, nor was there room for the Master in the inn; but there was room for every man, woman, and child that cared to crowd in." But she was firm, and we walked into the meeting

in silence, I praying, "Lord, give me grace to stand through this ordeal." I do not know the influence that was back of this rebuff, and it is not necessary that I should; but I felt that I had discharged my duty in offering to bring it before the convention, and must leave the rest in the hands of the Lord.

To fully recover from a severe attack of *la grippe*, I was compelled to seek a change of climate. I went to Pacific Grove, and was soon rewarded with perfect health and strength. I was then within a mile of a large settlement of Chinese fishermen, where they lived with their families. I took a Bible in one hand and a piece of chalk in the other, and walked over beside one of their black shanties, that would serve well as a blackboard. I said to one of the Chinamen, "Read to me in your language." "No can read Chinese," he replied. "Take twenty years to learn that kind Chinese Bible." I tried another and another, but none could read.

I then said, "Talk Chinese, and I will show you how easy it is to write your own language." A crowd soon gathered, and one man was pointed out to me who could read. As he read I wrote, and then wrote the alphabet, vowels and consonants. They saw the simplicity of it, and I had invitations to teach in their homes. They were willing to pay, but I told them I did not want money, that I was teaching them so they might have the gospel. I had many interesting, perplexing, and sometimes encouraging experiences in this village of Chinese fisherfolk. Here also I had to meet strong opposi-

tion from those who should have given encouragement to the work. Many of my pupils did well, although they could be spared only one short hour from their work of baiting fish-hooks. I received here much encouragement from a Chinese merchant, Kwong Ye, and other merchants. One of these young merchants who learned the system has since gone to China. And so the seed is being sown beside all waters.

I went to the home of the superintendent of a number of the fishermen, and was very graciously received by the two daughters. They were very bright, and were much pleased to have me teach them. I visited them from day to day, and, as they were accustomed to using their brains, they made very rapid progress. In six weeks' time, at a half hour a day, they had acquired such a perfect knowledge of the whole system that they were teaching the children during the day and their mother in the evening. One said, "I am teaching my mother, so that when I go to China I can correspond with her, for she can never hope to learn to write in Chinese characters."

I told them about the awful circumstance of the young Chinese girl who was stolen in Palo Alto and placed in a dirty jail overnight, with the kind Presbyterian superintendent of the Chinese home, who would not leave the girl alone. I said: "Now if you should get stolen, you could write a letter in Chinese shorthand, tell who stole you, and where you are, and drop it from your window. Some one

would find it and take it to a missionary to read, as this is to be taught in all the missions." One clapped her hands and said, "Isn't that good!" picked up her pencil, and went to work with renewed interest.

I also had two bright pupils in the home of a Chinese gambler. We took the blackboard from our school-room and put it in the little two-roomed house. The news of Diti's schoolhouse, with a big blackboard, soon spread to the next settlement. Persons from that settlement also wanted the lessons and the lesson leaves, which I still furnished free of charge. One of these visitors said to Diti: "Give me some of these lesson leaves. I am going to send my girls up to San Francisco to the mission school, and they can get Miss Williamson, of the Faith Mission, to teach them the Chinese shorthand. Then you can correspond with them." I said, "Thank the Lord, the work is spreading even in the missions."

In July I turned my attention to the Japanese, who became as much interested in watching me write and having me teach them as I was in having them read to me. A Japanese girl soon went to teaching the system, and interested the whole settlement. Now I have so many American pupils that I must give a public exhibition of the work, assisted by the Chinese and Japanese.

On returning to my home in Sacramento, I met Dr. G. A. Droll and wife, who, with some of their church-members, called and took lessons. They

were delighted with this quick way of reaching the Chinese. The doctor advised me to go to Oakland to teach some of their mission workers of the Adventist Church. There I met the ministers, editors, and officers, who approved of my work and are to print this book, the proceeds from which are to be devoted to the printing of the New Testament in universal stenography, or Chinese shorthand.

During this visit to Oakland and San Francisco, this system of writing the Chinese language, or other languages, was given a hearing by Bishop Hamilton, who endorsed it and recommended its use in the missions of the Methodist Church, and at this writing it is being taught in the San Francisco Methodist Chinese Mission. At the time of its admission there the following commendatory words appeared in the *Pacific Ensign:*—

"This phonetic system is remarkably simple, and promises to be a boon to missionaries and others to whom a rapid acquisition of the Chinese language is important. Mrs. Barrett has labored with the patient persistence characteristic of one possessing a grand idea, while others were unconscious of its value. Slowly but surely recognition comes to her, and one after another Chinese schools have taken up her methods."

And so for the success at last attained, for the blessings bestowed, for the experiences gained, and the lessons learned through many and trying difficulties, we praise His name who gives us all good things, and pray His blessing upon this work now given to the world. MRS. JULIA A. BARRETT.

Sacramento, Cal., September, 1902.

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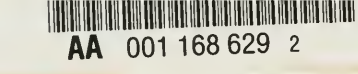
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